of Excise and Customs also fixes minimum tariff rates for various edible oils such as crude palm oil, RBD palm oil, crude palmolein, crude soyabean oil, etc. In cases of prices falling below the specified levels, the Government undertakes procurement operations, to ensure that farmers interest are protected. Imports are also regulated through the provisions of the Food Adulteration Act, 1954, Meat Food Product Order, Packaging requirements, Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures etc. The import of 300 sensitive items including major food items is being monitored on a regular basis by the Government for checking any surge in imports.

Assistance by MPEDA for purchase of fishing vessels

2449. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has decided to provide subsidy scheme of 50 per cent cost of capital cost of modern fishing vessels to their owners, to promote export of high value Sashmi graded chilled tuna fish, which is in heavy demand in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details of amount released as subsidy and the number of vessels modernized with subsidy amounts, during 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(c) if not, the reasons for not providing subsidy assistance; and

(d) whether it is a fact that 2.13 lakh tones of oceanic tuna fish exists in the coastal waters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) The Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA) are implementing a scheme for subsidizing the cost of conversion of existing mechanized/deep sea fishing vessels to monofilament tuna long liners, sanctioned by the Government in February, 2006. Under the scheme, the quantum of assistance is as follows:

(i) Rs. 7.50 lakh or 50% of the cost, whichever is less, for the conversion and acquisition of monofilament long line system in respect of mechanized vessels having an OAL of more than 13 meters and upto 20 meters, and

(ii) Rs. 15 lakhs or 50% of the cost, whichever is less, for the conversion and acquisition of monofilament long line system in respect of deep sea fishing vessels of OAL more than 20 meters.

So far MPEDA have granted advance approval in respect of 182 mechanized fishing vessels and 4 deep sea fishing vessels for conversion to tuna long liners. However, no financial assistance has been extended by MPEDA so far.

(d) It is estimated that 2.13 lakh tonnes of oceanic tuna exists in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Study on effect of FDI on rural areas

†2450. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would study the effect of FDI on the rural areas;

(b) if so, by when a committee would be constituted for the purpose;

(c) whether people from the rural background would also be included in this committee; and

(d) the purview of the committee and by when it would be asked to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) to (d) Government has agreed 'in principle' to the recommendation of the Consultative Committee of Parliament to commission a study on the impact of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in rural economy. The agency for undertaking the study and its terms of reference and time frame for its report is yet to be finalized.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.